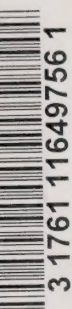


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Ontario Royal Commission inquiry into labour disputes

Hearings

v 3

January 1967



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ROYAL COMMISSION
INQUIRY INTO LABOUR DISPUTES

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HEARINGS HELD AT
Toronto, Ont.

VOL. NO.

3

DATE

13 Jan. 1967

Official Reporters

NETHERCUT & YOUNG LIMITED
48 YORK STREET
TORONTO 1, ONTARIO
TELEPHONE 363-3111



Nethercut & Young

Toronto, Ontario

IN THE MATTER OF The Public
Inquiries Act, R.S.O. 1960,
Ch. 323

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF an Inquiry
into Labour Disputes

BEFORE: The Honourable Ivan C.
Rand, Commissioner, at
123 Edward Street, Toronto,
Ontario, on Friday, January
13, 1967

E. Marshall Pollock Counsel to the Commission

APPEARANCE:

Wm. Morrison Private Individuals

Alan Peers

Nethercut & Young Limited, Official Reporters, 48 York
Street, Toronto, Ontario, per J.N. and R.J.Y.



Toronto, Ontario
Friday, January
13th, 1967

---At 2:00 p.m., the Hearing commenced.

MR. POLLOCK: William Morrison and Alan Peers, do you gentlemen represent any particular interest or are you here individually?

MR. MORRISON: As individuals, sir.

MR. POLLOCK: Are you members of any union?

MR. PEERS: I am a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

MR. POLLOCK: Which one of you is the spokesman?

MR. MORRISON: Both. I am on a temporary work permit from the International Electrical Workers.

Well, sir, I am appearing today to place certain grievances against local unions of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and also against the International Brotherhood itself. As an immigrant electrician in May '65. After finding myself a job, the local business agent gave me clearance a temporary card; in other words, I could not keep my job without permission from the local union. This agreed to. Immediately I started work, I was given understand from the attitude and conversation that the card man, I am referring to the temporary man on the job, is somebody set apart from the union member himself. I found that the union, as I understood it, is totally different than the system I had been working under.



1 The stories I heard from union members
2 and different cardmen from then on, proved to me that if
3 they were true, then all was not well with the union itself.
4 On the whole, I was treated very fairly by my work mates
5 who were members and temporary men of the union and also
6 I was treated fairly well by my employer, but after working
7 around a bit, I found out that one of the reasons I was
8 treated a bit differently than other cardmen, was because
9 I did voice my opinion openly and without any fear. That
10 opinion, of course, concerned mostly opinions about the
11 way the local union treated the temporary men, sir. We
12 refer to these temporary men as cardmen, sir. This refer-
13 ence keeps coming in because we do call them cardmen.

14 THE COMMISSIONER: You are a cardman
15 too?

16 MR. MORRISON: I am a cardman, yes.

17 THE COMMISSIONER: Would you mind just
18 giving a definition of a cardman?

19 MR. MORRISON: A cardman is an elec-
20 trician who approaches the union and is accepted on a
21 temporary work permit. He is issued with a work permit
22 from the union; otherwise he cannot work on union jobs.

23 THE COMMISSIONER: Can he become a
24 full member of the union?

25 MR. MORRISON: Well, I will explain
26 this, sir, if you will just be patient with me.

27 Normally, electricians, when they come
28 in, or if they come from another area, will approach the
29 I.B.E.W. local union office. In my case, it was 804 in
30 Kitchener. Some are greeted by the business agent with an



1 attitude which is very far from friendly, in fact, some of
2 them are advised to go home. I am particularly referring
3 to cardmen, now. If there is work available now and all
4 the men are employed, then the man applying for a temporary
5 permit will be issued with one. This situation is exper-
6 ienced by Canadian citizens as well as immigrants. However,
7 the immigrant walks very blindfolded into this situation
8 because it is not explained to us before we come over here.
9 When I arrived in May '65, I was required to pay \$1.00 a
10 day for a temporary work card. This, again, sir, was a
11 thing which was not explained to me when I first thought
12 of coming over to Canada to work.

13 MR. POLLOCK: Did you pay any other
14 dues as well?

15 MR. MORRISON: No, sir, just \$1.00 a
16 day. A dollar per working day. As soon as I learned that
17 a member of the union pays only \$9.00 a month, I then
18 started looking further into it and I found that \$6.00 of
19 the union member's \$9.00 went down to the International
20 Office for several purposes which I cannot state, and \$3.00
21 remained in his local union. The question now arose, why
22 do the cardmen pay \$21 a month and the local union members
23 pay \$3 because this is basically what we got down to. I
24 was told that this money would be deducted from my initia-
25 tion fee on admittance to the union but the set fee is only
26 \$102 so, therefore, after 5 months, my \$102 would be paid.
27 But the money was still being collected and, in fact, I
28 was forced to continue paying \$1.00 a day or clear out.

29 At this time, a group of cardmen got
30 together and made representation to the Department of



1 Citizenship and Immigration to ask if anything could be
2 done to stop the manner in which the local union was treat-
3 ing cardmen We had an interview with their officer in
4 Kitchener and he assured us that they would do all they
5 could. We do not know if it was as a result of their effort,
6 but in July, 1966, the cardmen's dues were dropped to \$10
7 without explanation.

8 MR. POLLOCK: \$10 a month?

9 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

10 MR. POLLOCK: Whether you worked 10
11 days or not?

12 MR. MORRISON: It doesn't make any
13 difference now whether we work, we are just paying \$20 or
14 \$22 a month now.

15 MR. POLLOCK: As I understood it, you
16 paid \$1.00 per working day.

17 MR. MORRISON: When we say a working
18 day, we do not include, say, Saturday and Sunday.

19 MR. POLLOCK: But if you weren't work-
20 ing during that period of time, there was no requirement
21 for you to pay \$1.00 a day, was there?

22 MR. MORRISON: I have never been in
23 that position, sir.

24 MR. POLLOCK: Do you know if that is
25 the case?

26 MR. MORRISON: I know of men who have
27 paid it but whether they are being forced to pay it, I
28 couldn't make that statement.

29 MR. POLLOCK: So, in some circumstances
30 where the \$10 flat rate was applied, if - you are not sure

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1 if a cardman only is required to pay \$1.00 a day for the
2 day he works under the new system. If you only work 9 days
3 during that month, you would be paying \$1.00 more than you
4 would if you were originally a cardman.

5 MR. PEERS: You have got the situation
6 picked up. You see, before July the 1st of last year, a
7 cardman had to pay \$1.00 per day to work and the local
8 union dropped that fee to \$10 per month.

9 MR. POLLOCK: That is right, but if
10 it is on a monthly basis, it is like if you rented a room
11 in a hotel, you could get a weekly rate cheaper than you
12 could a daily rate.

13 MR. MORRISON: I can only say this,
14 that I have only, in that period of time, had say, 2 days
15 of unemployment and these 2 days I still paid my money
16 anyway. I didn't query it, so I would not say I was forced
17 to pay that.

18 MR. POLLOCK: I see.

19 MR. MORRISON: We were still not given
20 any reason why we had to pay the \$10 a month and you must
21 remember that it would seem very unreasonable to us to be
22 paying \$22 and then even \$10 when we were not even represented
23 in the union in any shape or form. I mean, we had no
24 representation, we had no say in the union, we could not
25 attend union meetings, we have got no connection whatever,
26 except that we were held on a temporary work permit.

27 MR. POLLOCK: Were you working in the
28 shop in a shop situation?

29 MR. MORRISON: Construction industry.

30 MR. POLLOCK: Were the other members



1 of the electrical trades covered by a collective agreement?

2 MR. MORRISON: We are covered under
3 the same agreement, sir.

4 MR. POLLOCK: You were paid the same
5 rates as them under that agreement?

6 MR. MORRISON: Yes. This is one of
7 the reasons I say I, personally, do not object in any shape
8 or form to paying union dues and I will pay the union dues
9 that exist in any area that that union lays down. This is
10 fair. I realize that the conditions I work under now have
11 been obtained by this union and I am not in any shape or
12 form trying to go against this in any way. All I say is
13 that it would appear that we were being unjustly treated.

14 MR. POLLOCK: Well, you were in 1966
15 paying \$10 a month when the union member was paying -

16 MR. MORRISON: He was paying \$9, sir,
17 \$3 of which stayed in his local union.

18 MR. POLLOCK: He was paying \$9 a month.

19 MR. MORRISON: Well, there is the thing
20 here, sir. None of the card money which we pay goes to
21 the International Brotherhood in America. Now the union
22 member is in a different position. He pays \$9 and \$6 of
23 that goes to the head office.

24 MR. POLLOCK: So far as the individual
25 is concerned, it is still \$9 or \$10 wherever it goes?

26 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir, you can look
27 at it that way.

28 We also found that both on and off the
29 job the cardman is treated as inferior by the union members.

30 THE COMMISSIONER: In what way would



1 that be?

2 MR. MORRISON: Well, he is not allowed,
3 for one thing, to be a job steward; in other words, he
4 cannot be a steward on a job.

5 THE COMMISSIONER: Is that based on
6 seniority?

7 MR. MORRISON: No, this is based on
8 the fact that he is not a member of the union. Also, he
9 is not allowed to be a foreman or a pusher of any kind.

10 MR. POLLOCK: What is a pusher?

11 MR. MORRISON: A pusher is like a
12 charge hand, a lead hand. He is not allowed to hold any
13 of these positions just by the firm appointing him to it.
14 They must first have the say-so of the business agent of
15 the local union as to whether he can be or whether he can't.

16 THE COMMISSIONER: These are prelimin-
17 ary. How do they lead up to membership?

18 MR. MORRISON: Well, he must, first of
19 all be a temporary member for six months before he can be
20 asked to write the union examination.

21 THE COMMISSIONER: Oh, they conduct
22 an examination?

23 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir. Now, some-
24 times these are held every 6 months, sometimes it is a bit
25 longer. There was an entrance examination held in May,
26 1966 and 75 men wrote and only 7 passed the exam. When I
27 say 75 men, these are temporary men, temporary cardmen
28 who were invited to write the exam.

29 MR. POLLOCK: Those temporary cardmen
30 are the men that you describe as temporary members and



1 must be temporary members for 6 months, is that right?

2 MR. MORRISON: Yes.

3 MR. POLLOCK: How many wrote the exam?

4 MR. MORRISON: 75, and 7 passed the
5 exam.

6 MR. POLLOCK: What is the nature of the
7 exam?

8 MR. MORRISON: There is roughly about
9 26 questions.

10 MR. POLLOCK: Is it a trade type of
11 exam?

12 MR. MORRISON: It is a trade type of
13 exam, yes. We know that 3 of these men who passed, these
14 men did pass, were denied membership until they obtained
15 their provincial licence. This, obviously, points out that
16 the local union did not want to accept these men as the
17 Licence Act did not become law until November of that year.
18 This examination took place in May. In fact, the Ontario
19 licence date was then put over for another 6 months and
20 extended to May of 1967. So, in other words, those men,
21 having waited that time and written the exam, should have
22 been automatically accepted as members into the union.
23 This is as we understood it anyway.

24 It would seem, then, that there was
25 something wrong with the acceptance of temporary men into
26 the union. After this examination, there were so many
27 complaints voiced openly that at the next union elections
28 two of the officers of the examining board were replaced,
29 although it was said by the business agent that the Chair-
30 man of the Board had done an excellent job. The members



1 still did not return them to office which would make it
2 appear that even their own members did not agree with what
3 went on.

4 Another great injustice is the fact
5 that the unions keep large numbers of men on temporary
6 cards for periods of possibly 3 or 4 years, but if it suits
7 their purpose, they allow full membership to persons who
8 have never belonged to any union in their lives and this
9 case of ours is when the union takes union shops or
10 firms into an agreement. Now the men working there are
11 given membership into the union regardless of their quali-
12 fications and without having to serve any length of time
13 as a temporary member.

14 THE COMMISSIONER: Do they have to
15 pass a provincial examination?

16 MR. MORRISON: Well, in May, sir, it
17 is law in Ontario that every electrician will have to have
18 or be ready to sit for an Ontario licence.

19 THE COMMISSIONER: It is a condition
20 of the licence that he pass an examination?

21 MR. MORRISON: No, sir, there are two
22 different things here. One is a union examination which
23 is set up by the unions, sir --

24 THE COMMISSIONER: Aren't they based
25 on the same principles?

26 MR. MORRISON: No, sir, the union
27 exam has been in force for years. They are based on the
28 man's ability.

29 THE COMMISSIONER: The standards are
30 the same?



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1 MR. MORRISON: Yes, except for the
2 fact that the Ontario licence exam requires a much larger
3 scope for the man to know a lot more about electricity
4 than the union examination.

5 MR. POLLOCK: Can I ask you a question
6 on the industrial organization where it is certified by
7 the union and if they incorporate a union shop clause in
8 the collective agreement, those men must join the union?
9 Are you suggesting that the employees of the plant that
10 have voted for the union, who have been instrumental in
11 certification should then be discharged and new electricians
12 be brought in to replace them?

13 MR. MORRISON: No, sir, all I say, and
14 I think we are fairly stating this, is we can produce
15 evidence of where men have been on temporary cards for 4
16 or 5 years. Do you, sir, think it is fair that these men
17 should be overlooked or by-passed when it comes to - don't
18 think I am asking that this man be given the other man's
19 job, I am not asking this. All I am saying is why didn't
20 they give him fair treatment. If they can take one man in
21 on the basis that he is employed in the industry, why
22 can't they take another man in who is employed in the in-
23 dustry on the same basis? The man you have a record of
24 has been a member employed in the industry for 4 or 5 years.
25 They have this information in their own office. He is
26 working out of their office.

27 MR. POLLOCK: Is there any advantage
28 so far as employment is concerned whether you are a per-
29 manent member or a temporary member?

30 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir. For instance



1 a temporary member can be replaced, when work becomes
2 slack as it did last year, and we have a lot of men working
3 out of our local who work out of town. When the out of
4 town jobs go slack, these men will return to their own
5 local. These are full union members. A temporary man will
6 be moved off the job that he is in to make way for the
7 union men to come in and take his place. But this happens
8 in spite of the fact that some of these temporary men have
9 been employed by particular firms for a year or 18 months.

10 THE COMMISSIONER: How do you become
11 a member of the union?

12 MR. MORRISON: I would like to know
13 that, sir.

14 THE COMMISSIONER: What are the con-
15 ditions?

16 MR. MORRISON: The conditions are that
17 you have to write the examination and be accepted.

18 THE COMMISSIONER: You pass that exam-
19 ination -- is there anything else?

20 MR. MORRISON: Now they also state
21 that you must hold the provincial licence.

22 THE COMMISSIONER: Those are the two
23 conditions?

24 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

25 THE COMMISSIONER: I suppose the union
26 conducts that examination by means of a committee?

27 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

28 THE COMMISSIONER: Education committee,
29 or something like that?

30 MR. MORRISON: It is an appointed



1 examination committee.

2 THE COMMISSIONER: There are three men
3 on it?

4 MR. MORRISON: 3 or 4, sir.

5 THE COMMISSIONER: They are appointed
6 by a managing committee or the managing board, or something?

7 MR. MORRISON: As far as I know, sir.

8 THE COMMISSIONER: Have you a copy, for
9 instance, of the Constitution of the union?

10 MR. MORRISON: No, sir.

11 THE COMMISSIONER: Have you applied
12 for it?

13 MR. MORRISON: I have asked but I have
14 been told, as a temporary man, I am not entitled to these
15 things.

16 THE COMMISSIONER: You have to be a
17 member before you can have it?

18 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

19 THE COMMISSIONER: Is there any appeal
20 that you can make?

21 MR. MORRISON: I can't make an appeal
22 because I am not a member of the union.

23 THE COMMISSIONER: But you are a card
24 holder.

25 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir, but it is a
26 work permit.

27 THE COMMISSIONER: That simply permits
28 you to work, at a dollar a day, up to \$10 a month.

29 MR. MORRISON: No, sir, it permits me
30 to work provided I pay the \$10 a month.



1 THE COMMISSIONER: Well, that is the
2 same thing.

3 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

4 THE COMMISSIONER: Your problem is to
5 get into the union?

6 MR. MORRISON: I don't know, sir, at
7 the particular moment, whether I'd like to be associated
8 with the union, but before I disassociate myself, I want
9 to state these facts to this public inquiry.

10 I am going on, again, sir, to another
11 local, which is locally here. This is local union 353,
12 Toronto, and they have added recently to the cardman's
13 misery -- they not only make it difficult for the man to
14 join the I.B.E.W., but they also make him write an examina-
15 tion before they allow him to have a temporary work card,
16 or at least this is the case in an instance in which I can
17 prove the fact. We have working out of local 804, on a
18 temporary card, a Mr. Copeland Watson, who held a card there
19 for 12 months. In August, 1966, he wrote and passed the
20 Ontario Provincial examination. In December he decided to
21 move to Toronto. On reporting into the local and telling
22 them he had a job to go to, as his previous employer was
23 willing to transfer him to a job up here, he was told he
24 would have to go to the job that the local union sent him
25 to, but before they would issue him even with a temporary
26 card, he had to write an examination. Now, it must be
27 noted that this is not the usual practice when a temporary
28 card is issued. The man had worked out of a local branch
29 of the I.B.E.W. for 12 months. He was a provincial licence
30 holder; in other words, he filled all the qualifications



1 that should be necessary to be issued with a temporary card.
2 The only thing we can point to, sir, is that the man was a
3 Jamaican and he was a coloured gentleman. Whether this has
4 any bearing on the fact, I don't know, but it would seem to
5 be queer that no one else is asked to write it.

6 MR. POLLOCK: No one, to your limited
7 knowledge, has ever been asked to do that?

8 MR. MORRISON: No, sir. Whether this
9 is happening to every temporary cardman that goes in there
10 or not, I don't know, sir.

11 THE COMMISSIONER: Do you suggest that
12 the union has more or less monopolized the work?

13 MR. MORRISON: To a certain extent, sir.

14 THE COMMISSIONER: To what extent?

15 MR. MORRISON: Well, to the extent that,
16 as I said before, I am not familiar with the system of
17 unions here and I don't think that it is unionism at all,
18 as it is run. I came in and I fulfilled all the necessary
19 things; I reported to the union and I wanted to be a mem-
20 ber of the union. They are not interested in anything I
21 have done before or anything else. This does not even
22 come into it.

23 THE COMMISSIONER: What are the dif-
24 ferences between unionism with which you are acquainted --
25 that is of England?

26 MR. MORRISON: Yes.

27 THE COMMISSIONER: And what you find
28 here -- what is the essential, substantial difference?

29 MR. MORRISON: The substantial differ-
30 ence is that one of our Canadian workers could go over there



1 tomorrow and with inside two or three days of obtaining
2 himself a job, he would be, provided he proved himself to
3 the union as a tradesman, he would be a member of that
4 union, accepted. We would accept the man. After all, he
5 is entitled to come and work there the same as I am enti-
6 tled to come here. He offers me this invitation and I
7 offer it to him. So, therefore, I must offer him into
8 the union as well. It is supposed to be a brotherhood.

9 THE COMMISSIONER: There are no exam-
10 inations required in England?

11 MR. MORRISON: If this man proves his
12 qualifications, no. He would be put before the members of
13 the branch he applied to and he would be accepted.

14 THE COMMISSIONER: What do you suggest
15 is the situation here? Has this union made contracts
16 with contractors by which they have, in effect, an exclusive
17 right to furnish the services?

18 MR. MORRISON: They have this contract.

19 THE COMMISSIONER: They have the con-
20 tract with the majority of contractors?

21 MR. MORRISON: I would not say the
22 majority, but the big contractors -- the ones who count,
23 they have got it sewn up tight. There is no way 'round it.
24 Even if the I.B.E.W. cannot fulfil their contract in re-
25 gard to supplying enough men to a contractor, the contrac-
26 tor is then allowed to go outside and employ his own men,
27 but before they can go on the job they must have clearance
28 from the union.

29 THE COMMISSIONER: Have you been able
30 to get any work in which you could be engaged otherwise



1 than in accordance with your card?

2 MR. MORRISON: This would not be my normal
3 suit, to go and work outside the union, but I have no option
4 now, I don't think. I will now be applying to a non-union
5 shop for work but it will be purely --

6 THE COMMISSIONER: You prefer to be a
7 unionist?

8 MR. MORRISON: Certainly, sir, I have had
9 a union card for a number of years and I am strongly trade
10 union, and if I am forced to go outside it will purely be
11 force of circumstances. I have a large family to keep and
12 I have got to live and they have got to eat. We started a
13 study group, sir, and we found out we had to obtain Ontario
14 licence. You realize, when we come here, we don't know
15 the standards that exist here in regard to the electrical
16 codes, and these are things which the Ontario government
17 has fairly enough said, that if a man is going to work
18 here, he must be familiar with the codes and we must know
19 that he is capable of doing the job. So, they have set a
20 licence. I think this is a very good idea. We had a pro-
21 blem then, because how do we learn these things? We decided
22 we would get together into a study group because there were
23 no other classes being run and we formed classes and helped
24 ourselves to study to obtain the licence. Now, immediately
25 this started, the local union then started their action.
26 For instance, we had certain union members who became
27 members of the classes because they needed their Ontario
28 licence as well. They were barred from attending the
29 classes and told that they would probably be dismissed from
30 the union if they did in the future.



1 THE COMMISSIONER: What was the objection
2 -- the study of it?

3 MR. MORRISON: The organization, probably,
4 that the men were studying under an organized group.

5 THE COMMISSIONER: What do you mean by
6 "organized" -- it was just a group that got together, wasn't
7 it?

8 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir, but it seemed
9 this was not going to be allowed by the union.

10 THE COMMISSIONER: This was formed simply
11 for the purpose of enabling you to pass the tests of the
12 province and obtain a licence?

13 MR. MORRISON: Correct, sir. We have had
14 23 men enter for the examinations and 22 have passed out
15 of the 23.

16 THE COMMISSIONER: Have you obtained that
17 licence?

18 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

19 THE COMMISSIONER: Now, just go on.

20 MR. MORRISON: These classes were open to
21 anybody, sir, and we informed the labour office in Kitchener
22 that we were opening the classes and anybody who should have
23 been informed, we informed them and told them that anybody
24 at all was welcome to come along; the place was open to
25 anybody.

26 MR. POLLOCK: What percentage of non-union
27 employment is available to members of the electrical trade?

28 MR. MORRISON: It is a thing which I
29 recently started to look at, and it does seem that there
30 are quite a number of small shops, let us say, employing



1 perhaps 10 men or 5 men. It does seem there are quite a
2 number of these about who are not covered by I.B.E.W. con-
3 tracts.

4 MR. POLLOCK: How do the rates in those
5 shops compare with the union rates?

6 MR. MORRISON: In one or two they compare
7 very favourably. In fact, in one of the bigger small shops
8 it employs about 20 men, I think possibly his agreement
9 is better. Some of the others, of course, are not too
10 good.

11 MR. POLLOCK: Would you say, generally,
12 they are better?

13 MR. MORRISON: No, generally they are
14 worse. That would be my own opinion from the experience
15 of talking to these men. We eventually had 120 men attend-
16 ing the classes and then the union started to take steps
17 to break it up. In fact, cardmen were told indiscreetly
18 that they would lose their temporary work permits if they
19 continued to be associated with the classes. You must
20 realize, sir, that when we come here, we come here pretty
21 well empty handed. We don't know anything, and we are
22 depending on people to be pretty good to us. In other
23 words, I don't mean we are depending on hand-outs -- don't
24 get me wrong, but we are depending on help from people.
25 We want guidance and we want advice. Suddenly, we find
26 out this is not available; in fact, the opposite is avail-
27 able, and we are fighting odds. In other words, we have
28 to go back into ourselves and we have to start looking
29 around and fending for yourself the best way you can. This,
30 to my mind, is not a healthy atmosphere to be in at all.



1 We found that out of 120 men, I think we now have about
2 15 still attending. Mainly this is due to fear, job fear
3 and nothing else. These men are afraid.

4 MR. POLLOCK: Was there any attempt or
5 suggestion made at any of these educational meetings to
6 hive-off from the union and organize yourselves into a dif-
7 ferent type of body?

8 MR. MORRISON: We did do something, as I
9 did state earlier on. Some of us made representation to
10 the immigration authorities because we have no one else
11 to appeal to -- or, we did not know the procedure, let us
12 put it that way. We were in their hands, more or less, I
13 would say. We came in through the Immigration Department,
14 so we automatically took it it would be their responsibil-
15 ity to advise us.

16 MR. POLLOCK: So this group was, at least
17 at one stage, or at some stage, considering re-establishing
18 yourself in a different form of union?

19 MR. MORRISON: No, sir. I would say that
20 was possibly the intention of some members, but definitely
21 not of all, because, after all, there were certain union
22 members who were members of this and they would not, I
23 would say -- I would not condemn these men and say they
24 were bad union men. I would not say they would organize
25 behind their own union.

26 MR. POLLOCK: Good union men might want to
27 be good union men on their own with another union in which
28 they have more control?

29 MR. MORRISON: This is true, sir.

30 THE COMMISSIONER: As it is now, did you



1 have anything ready showing the objectives of this group?

2 MR. MORRISON: We did have a paper which
3 was made out which gave the aim of the group which was to
4 study for the Ontario licence, or whatever the qualifica-
5 tions that were required.

6 THE COMMISSIONER: The formation of another
7 union too?

8 MR. MORRISON: No, sir.

9 THE COMMISSIONER: Anything of that sort
10 in the aims?

11 MR. MORRISON: Nothing of the sort.

12 MR. POLLOCK: Did you have a name?

13 MR. MORRISON: We called it The Canadian
14 Association of Electrical Technicians.

15 MR. POLLOCK: Canadian Association of
16 Electrical Technicians sounds like a pretty high-powered
17 name for a study group.

18 MR. MORRISON: I said, sir, that there were
19 certain men --

20 MR. POLLOCK: So the union had some basis
21 for some fear that they were going to lose some of their
22 membership perhaps to another group.

23 MR. MORRISON: I would think so, sir.

24 We had an instance of this when we were
25 requested to open classes in Hamilton. We went along and
26 we again had an open meeting which anyone could attend and
27 which they did and we formed the basis of a class. Don't
28 forget this was formed with everyone present, whoever
29 wanted to be. We didn't know whether he was a union man
30 or not, it didn't worry me whether he was or not. The



1 following day, two of the members who were appointed to
2 run the classes were dismissed from their work. One of
3 them had his temporary union card withdrawn and has never
4 had it back since.

5 Now, I don't know whether this sort of thing
6 is what you call unionism, but it is certainly not what I
7 would call unionism. A good union would fight that openly.
8 If they thought there was a chance of another union forming
9 then there must be a reason for another union forming and
10 my idea would be to find out how and why and remedy my own
11 position, but don't go as they do, and did, and use strong
12 arm methods because that is what I would call something
13 different. When you hold a man off from his livelihood,
14 that is gruesome, sir.

15 THE COMMISSIONER: Have you still your card?

16 MR. MORRISON: I have, sir. Appearing here
17 today is automatic disqualification, not for me, as I am
18 a temporary man anyway, but Mr. Peers is more involved
19 because he is a full member of I.B.E.W., or he was until
20 this afternoon, shall we say, or he is until the morning.
21 But their international stuff is screwed up that much that
22 he won't even see it.

23 MR. POLLOCK: Do you have anything to add,
24 Mr. Peers, to that?

25 MR. PEERS: Yes, I can support the facts
26 that Mr. Morrison has stated and I would just like to men-
27 tion the new pension plan that the I.B.E.W. just introduced.
28 I have been a member of the I.B.E.W. for over two years and
29 have been paying \$3.60 into its pension plan. Now, you
30 don't get a choice whether you want to partake of the plan



1 or not. In fact, you must subscribe to it: otherwise you
2 don't get membership in the union.

3 As the I.B.E.W. controls the majority of the
4 construction and industrial work, the man is in a position
5 where he must pay this money because he has got to be a
6 member of the union in some shape or form.

7 MR. POLLOCK: It is a union pension plan,
8 administered by the union?

9 MR. PEERS: It is run by the International
10 Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, yes.

11 MR. POLLOCK: Completely union plan, no
12 independent administrators or anything?

13 MR. PEERS: No.

14 MR. POLLOCK: What type of pension does
15 it pay - retirement pension, disability pension, health
16 benefits, what kind of pension?

17 MR. PEERS: Death \$1,000, accidental death
18 \$2,000 and providing that you have been in the plan for 20
19 years, you can draw a pension.

20 MR. POLLOCK: Basically an insurance cover-
21 age, though?

22 MR. PEERS: Yes, just a pension plan, that
23 is all. There is no investment or anything like that. It
24 is not an investment plan.

25 MR. POLLOCK: It is insurance.

26 MR. PEERS: Yes.

27 Now, the I.B.E.W. recently discovered that
28 this pension plan was in jeopardy. The \$3.60 per month,
29 per member was not enough and, in order to remedy their
30 position, an increase would have to be made. Now, they



1 sent 3 circulars to all members last year --

2 MR. POLLOCK: You don't dispute the honesty
3 of that actuality basis whether the plan would last or not,
4 you don't quarrel with it?

5 MR. PEERS: Well, I can't, I am not in a
6 position to. They sent 3 circulars to each member explain-
7 ing the increase and each local individually voted on the
8 matter and representatives from the local would go back to
9 the convention which was held last September and vote on it
10 for the local unions. The local union I belonged to reject-
11 ed the proposal along with 771 local unions of the I.B.E.W.
12 This, I would definitely say, included the Canadian local
13 units.

14 The proposal was passed at the convention
15 by a result of 850 locals to 772 and the monthly subscrip-
16 tion to the pension plan was raised from 3.60 to \$10 a month.

17 MR. POLLOCK: That is one of the problems
18 of majority rule, I suppose.

19 MR. PEERS: Right, yes. But why must we
20 pay this?

21 THE COMMISSIONER: \$19 a month.

22 MR. PEERS: No, \$15.80 now, as of January
23 the 1st, because of the \$9 that we were paying last year,
24 the \$3.60 of that \$9 was for the pension plan.

25 MR. POLLOCK: That is \$15.80 union dues
26 now, is that it?

27 MR. PEERS: Yes.

28 MR. POLLOCK: Well, Mr. Morrison gets a
29 bargain then, he only has to pay \$10.

30 MR. MORRISON: Excuse me, we haven't begun



1 to pay yet. We don't know.

2 THE COMMISSIONER: What would you suggest?

3 How are you going to correct that? Certainly in England
4 they leave those questions with the union.

5 MR. MORRISON: We run a different system
6 altogether, sir, and the point is this: You have got a
7 rather complicated thing here. You have got two different
8 countries voting on one plan and those two different govern-
9 ments run different schemes of their own. Our Canadian
10 government here runs a pension plan now and quite a number
11 of the men are quite satisfied, they are not saying it is
12 everything it should be, but they are quite satisfied it
13 has been instituted and it is now on its way to becoming
14 a set thing.

15 MR. POLLOCK: There is a pretty good system
16 of social security benefits in the United States as well,
17 I can point out, so I don't think there is that much dif-
18 ference on that point.

19 MR. MORRISON: This may be so, but the
20 point is it is rather a difficult thing, surely, I think
21 you must agree I don't know of any other place in the
22 world where you have two countries voting on one union
23 issue, such as this, so complex as this, and it is complex.

24 THE COMMISSIONER: What do you mean by two
25 countries voting?

26 MR. MORRISON: Well, as Mr. Peers said, you
27 have got a number of locals in Canada, sir, and you have
28 got a number in the States. Now, obviously, the American
29 locals must outnumber the Canadian locals and, consequently,
30 I don't see how it is possible if anything is ever agreed



1 in the States, how the Canadian group can ever overcome it.

2 MR. POLLOCK: How does the membership in
3 the United States compare with the membership in Canada?

4 MR. MORRISON: Overwhelming.

5 MR. POLLOCK: How about the benefits that
6 you would accrue from contributions made across the line
7 as opposed to any kind of strike or benefits, organizational
8 benefits of the union?

9 MR. MORRISON: I can only say this, that I
10 am not experienced to really talk on this matter. I can
11 only quote stuff that I have been told and what has happened
12 in the past, but the only strike that I know of which exist-
13 ed in the local here, I think the across-the-line people
14 granted them a thousand dollars. The strike of how many
15 members involved, I wouldn't like to say now, but it cer-
16 tainly didn't go very far, that is for sure.

17 THE COMMISSIONER: This some \$15 and a
18 half, is that the amount that is paid in the United States
19 too?

20 MR. PEERS: They all pay \$10 into the pen-
21 sion plan. Whatever each local union pays as members for
22 dues, I don't know.

23 MR. MORRISON: The local union dues could
24 vary from place to place.

25 THE COMMISSIONER: But the pension amount
26 is \$10 in the United States and \$9 here, is it?

27 MR. MORRISON: No, it is \$10 all over.

28 THE COMMISSIONER: I thought that was the
29 fee you were charged by the local.

30 MR. MORRISON: That is for a temporary



1 cardman, sir. It is very confusing, I know, but this is
2 the position they have created.

3 MR. POLLOCK: Is there anything you wish
4 to add to that, Mr. Peers?

5 MR. PEERS: No, just that I think every
6 member of the union that I have spoken with, don't want
7 this and I don't want it.

8 THE COMMISSIONER: You don't want this
9 insurance feature?

10 MR. PEERS: I don't want the \$10 a month
11 plan.

12 THE COMMISSIONER: Is the membership re-
13 quired to participate in the insurance?

14 MR. PEERS: The membership of our local
15 union, yes. You must accept this.

16 THE COMMISSIONER: Then, what you object
17 to is the substantial increase in premiums?

18 MR. PEERS: Correct, yes, and being put in
19 a position where I am forced to pay it.

20 MR. POLLOCK: Does every local in Canada
21 have to pay this?

22 MR. PEERS: No, it is up to the local
23 union itself, when it makes its by-laws, whether they
24 force a man to take it or not.

25 MR. POLLOCK: Well, if you can persuade
26 the majority in your local to change the by-laws and make
27 it optional, you would not have to pay it?

28 MR. PEERS: Yes, but I have got to wait
29 four years to do this because it is four years before our
30 next contract.



1 THE COMMISSIONER: The by-laws or constitu-
2 tion are every four years?

3 MR. PEERS: Yes. Well, whatever agreement
4 we get with the contractors. This time it happened to be
5 a four-year agreement.

6 MR. POLLOCK: Are we talking about the by-
7 laws or are we talking about the collective agreement?

8 MR. PEERS: The by-laws made whenever a
9 new agreement arises.

10 THE COMMISSIONER: You make an agreement
11 with whom?

12 MR. PEERS: With the contractors.

13 THE COMMISSIONER: What contractors, the
14 group?

15 MR. PEERS: In Kitchener there are three
16 large contractors and the union negotiates with these con-
17 tractors.

18 THE COMMISSIONER: Does it do all the
19 electrical work that these contractors perform in construc-
20 tion?

21 MR. PEERS: Yes, they are the bargaining
22 body that we bargain with and all the other companies in
23 the city have to go along with the agreement that they make
24 with the union.

25 THE COMMISSIONER: That agreement fixes what,
26 your wages?

27 MR. PEERS: Yes.

28 MR. POLLOCK: You work in the construction
29 industry as opposed to an industrial plant?

30 MR. PEERS: That is correct, sir.



1 MR. POLLOCK: Anything else, gentlemen?

2 MR. MORRISON: Unfortunately, I can't give
3 you these names and addresses, but these are statements
4 again, of men - these are statements that can back up every-
5 thing I have said.

6 THE COMMISSIONER: In your case, do you
7 challenge the honesty or the fairness of the examination
8 results?

9 MR. MORRISON: No, sir, I don't stress
10 this point, sir, because I don't disagree that the union
11 is entitled to have an entrance examination. What I say
12 is that the whole procedure and the whole set-up of the
13 way the local union is run is wrong, as regards what I
14 know of unionism. I am not challenging their right to
15 hold an examination, sir. This is something I am not doing.

16 MR. POLLOCK: When in Rome, Mr. Morrison.

17 MR. MORRISON: I am prepared to do this
18 and I have tried to do exactly what was required of me.
19 This is the first time and I am very fortunate, maybe, in
20 the fact that an Inquiry like this has been opened and I
21 have been allowed to come out and express my views openly
22 in a place where it may do some good. At least I know
23 one thing, I will be heard and it will be judged and weigh-
24 ed fairly accordingly.

25 MR. POLLOCK: I think the Canadian Labour
26 Congress, too, are considering some changes in their con-
27 stitutional structure and perhaps they might like to hear
28 from you as well.

29 MR. MORRISON: As just an instance, sir,
30 to back my statement, these are men, these are statements



1 from men. Here is a man paid \$515 into a local union. He
2 then passes the entrance examination and is still not ac-
3 cepted because they stand around and say to him, "No, you
4 still haven't got your Ontario licence".

5 THE COMMISSIONER: Could you give us copies
6 of those letters without the names?

7 MR. MORRISON: I can give you those, yes.
8 I would not like to give you the names.

9 THE COMMISSIONER: I don't want the names.

10 MR. MORRISON: These men might be in jeop-
11 ardy. There is one Canadian lad here, paid \$600 odd into
12 his local union and he was previously a member of the local
13 union and he is still not now a member. This is not fair,
14 sir.

15 MR. POLLOCK: Are all members of the local
16 in Kitchener fully employed?

17 MR. MORRISON: At the moment I think - well
18 I am one of the ones that is unemployed but I am not a
19 full member of the union because, if I was, then it would
20 be different.

21 MR. POLLOCK: Would you not feel you had
22 a right over someone who was only a temporary man?

23 MR. MORRISON: No, why should I? If a firm
24 employs him and they are satisfied with his work, who am
25 I to go and take his job? If I have a job and a man comes
26 in to do it for me, I would think it was very unfair.

27 MR. POLLOCK: So you do not think a union
28 man has any preference on a job to a non-union man?

29 MR. MORRISON: No, sir.

30 MR. PEERS: They are all union men. The



1 difference is one is a union man and one is not.

2 THE COMMISSIONER: These other people are
3 all card carrying members?

4 MR. MORRISON: Temporary permit men.

5 THE COMMISSIONER: When you take your
6 card you express your willingness to join the union.

7 MR. MORRISON: They are all willing to
8 join the union.

9 THE COMMISSIONER: That is what I say, all
10 those who take the card do it on the basis that this is a
11 preliminary step to their entrance into the union.

12 MR. MORRISON: This is correct, sir, yes.

13 THE COMMISSIONER: Have you made any
14 representations to any of the union officers?

15 MR. MORRISON: The only representation we
16 made was when the union definitely came out in the open at
17 one of their meetings and said they were going to withdraw
18 three of the temporary cardmen's cards who were attending
19 the classes. We then made representation to the Inter-
20 national Office here in Toronto and their ruling, or the
21 local union's ruling evidently was overruled and the men's
22 cards were not withdrawn. We have had a visit from Mr.
23 Matthews in the office here.

24 THE COMMISSIONER: Who is Mr. Matthews?

25 MR. MORRISON: He is an international
26 representative based here in Toronto and we discussed
27 things with him and explained things to him, but still no
28 big change has taken place. Here is an instance, as I
29 say, where this man has paid \$600 and this is up to June
30 of last year. He has paid \$600 in on a temporary card.



1 He says here:

2 "I was a member of local 804 from March
3 '53 to April '55. I was dismissed from
4 the union because I was unable to pay my
5 dues due to unemployment. I know of
6 three men who I can name, who left the
7 union under these conditions. On request,
8 they were reinstated. However, this was
9 not given to me. When I applied for re-
10 instatement the business agent made out
11 an application but declined to date such.
12 I now have my Ontario certification."

13 This man is a Canadian, who was born here and lived here
14 all his life and works as an electrician. This, of course,
15 goes to point out that we are not the only ones.

16 THE COMMISSIONER: Take Kitchener, how
17 many members of the union would there be there?

18 MR. MORRISON: I am only guessing here,
19 sir: I would think in the region of about 320 or 330.

20 THE COMMISSIONER: How many electrical
21 men are working in Kitchener, union and non-union?

22 MR. MORRISON: I would think in the region
23 of over a thousand men.

24 THE COMMISSIONER: A thousand electrical
25 technicians?

26 MR. MORRISON: Working on electrical instal-
27 lations.

28 THE COMMISSIONER: And only 20 belong to
29 the union?

30 MR. MORRISON: 300 or 350.



1 THE COMMISSIONER: That is what I asked you.

2 MR. MORRISON: That is the number of full

3 union members.

4 THE COMMISSIONER: That means only about

5 one-third of the electricians in Kitchener belong to the

6 union?

7 MR. MORRISON: Correct, sir.

8 THE COMMISSIONER: They must all live.

9 MR. MORRISON: They all live, sir, yes.

10 THE COMMISSIONER: Then the scope of the

11 union is limited, at least.

12 MR. PEERS: The majority of these men work

13 in factories on maintenance jobs and their own shops have

14 their own unions.

15 MR. MORRISON: I would say there are quite

16 a large number too, employed on housing contracts and things

17 like this, which the I.B.E.W. just does not cover.

18 THE COMMISSIONER: What does the I.B.E.W.

19 cover?

20 MR. MORRISON: Mostly they go for construc-

21 tion and any big shops, big factories, but they do not seem

22 to pay too much attention to the smaller shops.

23 THE COMMISSIONER: Not to the smaller jobs

24 -- putting wires in a house and things like that?

25 MR. MORRISON: That is right, sir. This

26 man seems to be left to his own devices.

27 THE COMMISSIONER: Then you have that area

28 open to you?

29 MR. MORRISON: Yes, sir.

30 MR. POLLOCK: Thank you, gentlemen.



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MR. MORRISON: Thank you.

MR. POLLOCK: We will adjourn now until
Monday morning at 10:00 o'clock.

---Adjournment.

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